

pled guilty to conspiracy and theft of property in a special territorial case. They conspired to convert dues checks and issued Local 1793 checks for their personal use totaling \$184,129. This was a very serious matter, I suggest.

In May of this year, in Michigan, Alan Raines, former financial secretary of Steelworkers Local 1358 was charged with embezzling union funds in the amount of \$274,262. That is not chicken feed. That is huge money. A lot of these unions do not have that many members, and the cost per member in one, I remember specifically, was about \$1,000 per member in the amount of loss that occurred.

Here, on April 2, 2007, in Puerto Rico, the president of the International Longshoremen's local was found guilty of 12 counts of embezzlement. He was charged among other counts with conspiracy to embezzle union funds in excess of \$1,950,000. That is a breath-taking amount. Both of those, in May and April of this year. In March of this year, in New York, John Daley, former chief financial officer of the New York State Nurses Association, was sentenced to time in prison after pleading guilty to grand larceny for taking \$1,193,000 in union funds. These are public records. These are huge amounts of money.

In June of last year in Connecticut, a former financial secretary of Local 745 of PACE was charged with taking \$138,000, embezzling that much money.

In June of this year, in my hometown, sadly, the Southern District of Alabama, where I at one time was a Federal prosecutor myself in the United States District Court there, Kenneth Mays, the former treasurer of IBEW Local 1053, was sentenced after pleading guilty to embezzlement and ordered to pay \$37,000 in restitution, reimbursement. This is right in my home state.

On July of last year, in Fulton County, GA, in the district court, a bookkeeper for IBEW Local 613 was indicted for taking \$11,000.

In December of 2005, in the Northern District of Iowa, Debra Herrig was sentenced and pled guilty to embezzling union funds and made restitution in the amount of \$13,000.

In December of 2004, in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa, Rodney Fox was charged with embezzling \$89,000 of union funds.

In May of 2005, in the Southern District of Iowa, Amanda Kemmer was sentenced to 24 months and ordered to pay \$209,000 in full restitution for embezzling union funds.

There are lots more I can indicate.

I will repeat. I don't believe there is any need for this kind of criminal activity to go on. I believe a lot of it occurs because there is so little oversight. If we had a rigorous oversight and audit function by the Department of Labor, we would see a lot less of it. If the unions were required to promptly and fully report the expenditures,

union members would be able to watch for problems and pick them up sooner and keep these kind of embezzlements from going to hundreds of thousands of dollars, even millions of dollars. That is why this office, of all offices, should not be reduced.

I understand some people believe it is a burden, and for a good union that never had any problems I guess filing it is a burden. It may not be a necessary thing. But, really, probably it is because the union members get to see where their funds are being spent, honestly and fairly.

Most unions, of course, are honest and do a good job, and most union members are the salt of the Earth and couldn't be better people, and most union leaders are honest and decent and work hard every day to protect the interests of their own members. They try to make sure they get a fair deal in the workplace.

I am telling you we need to be attuned to that because wages are not what I think they ought to be for the average worker in America today. There are a lot of reasons for that. I suggest one of them is this very large surge of low-wage labor that comes into our country illegally.

But, regardless, we want to help our union members receive the highest possible wage and to be able to know that their leadership is honest and trustworthy and doing the right thing. I believe we have to get this money back into this account. We need to be sure we have at least a modest increase in spending to keep up with the inflation rate so we can continue at least this modest rate of enforcement.

I urge my colleagues to not see this as an action that goes against unions but as an action that will strengthen unions, that will affirm the importance of the union members' money that they contribute, and to make sure it is spent wisely.

It is sad to say, sometimes you get a big restitution order of \$1 million—I have been there and seen them, but it is like getting blood from a turnip. It will never come back. It is gone and the members have actually lost it and nobody can do anything about it.

I urge my colleagues to give serious consideration to this amendment. I think it is reasonable and fair and the offset, let me repeat, does not deal with the controversial ILO, International Labor Organization, that does some good. It certainly has good objectives. How well they spend their money, I have my doubts, but it has good objectives. It is an offset against administrative expenses, and across the board it will be a small impact on the administrative budgets of these agencies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I would like to respond to some of the points made by the Senator from Alabama. First of all, I want to make it clear that I do not know of any Senator

on either side of the aisle who is not in favor of going after either fraud, waste and abuse, or any kind of criminal activities—whether it is done in the business community, by corporations, or whether it is done in labor unions. Really, the question is, how do you do it? What is the best way of doing it? Are we getting a good return on the dollar, so to speak, for what we are investing in?

I thought we might take a look and see what has been happening in this whole area in the Department of Labor over the past few years, where their focus has been and where it has not been, and what the priorities are. You can tell a lot about someone's priorities by how they spend their money. The bill before us provides some modest increase in work protections agencies—OSHA, MSHA, Wage and Hour Division. We also provide for the OLMS—that is the office the Senator from Alabama has been talking about, Office of Labor Management Standards—\$45.7 million. That is not chicken feed. I will talk more about that in a bit.

But I want to point to some charts to show where we are, to put it in better perspective. Right now at the Department of Labor, for OSHA—that is the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. These are the people who go out and make sure your workplaces are safe, that you are not exposed to toxic chemicals, things that cause cancer, or unsafe workplaces where you wind up losing a limb, an arm, a hand, or where you are exposed to different things that may injure your lungs, whether it is asbestos inhalation or any kind of toxic chemicals that may have long-term profound effects. This is OSHA.

What does the administration spend on OSHA? They spend \$26 per workplace.

The Wage and Hour Division is the people who go out and make sure you are actually being paid what you say you should be paid, that you are getting overtime pay, that the company is abiding by the wage and hour provisions of the contract, for example, that the union may have signed. So in Wage and Hour, they are spending \$26 per workplace. Under Occupational Safety and Health, the Department of Labor is spending about \$26 per workplace—about the same.

What are they spending at the Office of Labor Management Standards? It is \$2,707 per union; \$26 per workplace for OSHA, 100 times more for OLMS than they are spending on OSHA investigating where people get injured, damaged, maimed for life due to unsafe working conditions.

There it is, 100 times more for OLMS. Yet they say it is not enough money. They need more. Let's see what that means. OLMS—more staff. More staff and fewer results.

I was listening to the Senator from Alabama. It would be one thing if, over these years they were spending more money and hiring more staff, they actually got more convictions and that